

Brookhaven Adds \$2 Million to Macchia Fund for Land Preservation Program

posted on 6/14/2013 5:34:00 PM

June 14, 2013

Farmingville, NY - Brookhaven Supervisor Ed Romaine today announced that the Town will be adding \$2 million to the "Joseph Macchia Fund" for land preservation. The Town Board is expected to approve a resolution for the funding at their June 18 Town Board meeting.

The additional \$2 million in funding will be provided by existing funds in several accounts that had been budgeted in previous years for land preservation, but were not expended. No new tax dollars or new bond issues will be used for this funding.

"Identifying these funds that can only be used for land preservation is a double win for our residents," said Supervisor Romaine. "We will be preserving and protecting the open space and rural character of our community for generations to come, and doing it in a way that won't ask them for more money to make these purchases, saving taxpayer dollars."

The Joseph Macchia Environmental Preservation Capital Reserve Fund is named after former Brookhaven Councilman Joseph Macchia, a Mount Sinai resident who served on the Town Board from 1979 until his death while in office in 1998. Macchia was the Chairman of Brookhaven's 1996 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, and was a proponent of open space preservation. The Macchia Fund was Brookhaven's first program for land preservation, using \$1.25 million provide matching funds for county and state land purchases.

In May, the Town Board expanded the uses for which the money in the Macchia Fund can be used, including preservation of:

- stream and river corridors throughout the Town;
- properties that contain functional wildlife habitat for endangered, threatened or species of special concern;
- parcels that contain National Heritage Program elements;
- farmland, or properties used to grow agricultural products;
- properties containing passive recreational value, or serve as a link to adjacent lands possessing such value; and
- parcels identified in the New York State open Space Plan, and other environmentally sensitive areas.

Earlier this year, the Town Board approved a "Land Use Intensification Mitigation Fee," which requires developers to contribute \$750 to the Macchia Fund for every 1% increase in development intensity per acre of land in their application. This fee will provide a revenue stream to for the Town to use for open space preservation acquisitions.

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